



Nfld. & Labrador

3 Labrador West women sue suspended MD and local health authority



College found Dr. Adekunle Owolabi guilty of hugging, kissing and sexualized comments

[Chris O'Neill-Yates](#) · CBC News · Posted: Dec 07, 2016 7:21 PM NT | Last Updated: December 8, 2016



In this file photo, Dr. Adelunle Owolabi speaks with his lawyer Paul Stokes at his professional misconduct hearing in St. John's. (Mark Quinn/CBC)

Three women are suing a doctor whose licence has been suspended for six months and the Labrador Regional Health Authority that employed him for breach of duty, negligence and failing to perform duty of care.

- [Complainant in Owolabi case says sanctions too lenient](#)

- **MD who asked patient 'do you like big ones or small ones?' loses licence for 6 months**

In September, a tribunal of the province's College of Physicians and Surgeons found Dr. Adekunle Owolabi – a doctor in at the Labrador West Health Centre – guilty of professional misconduct based on complaints from four of his patients.

3 women allege suffering

Now three of the four complainants have filed individual statements of claim in the Supreme Court of Newfoundland and Labrador seeking general damages.

The lawyer representing the three women said they have experienced various difficulties in their lives.

"That ranges from being unable to work, through to not being able to go to the doctor any more because there's an absence of trust with medical professionals," said Allison Conway.

The women complained that Owolabi inappropriately touched and kissed them, and made sexual comments during visits to his office at the hospital.

The lawsuit alleges the women have suffered, among other things, physical and mental pain, humiliation and betrayal, and lack of enjoyment of life.





Allison Conway represents three women suing Dr. Adekunle Owolabi and the Labrador-Grenfell Regional Health Authority (Courtesy Budden and Associates)

The lawsuit also alleges that the health authority knew, or ought to have known, about the misconduct and prevented it.

"There could have been further investigations done," said Conway. "There were incidents where this was reported to hospital staff."

As a result of coming forward, Conway said the women have also experienced backlash.

"In our society, unfortunately, many people choose not to believe women who are speaking out."

Neither of the two defendants have yet filed a statement of defence.

“They want to make sure no one else has to undergo what happened to them.”

- Alison Conway, Lawyer

In its September ruling, the College of Physicians and Surgeons also ordered Owolabi to complete a boundary education course, and he must be chaperoned by a female when seeing female patients for a period of two years when he returns to his medical practice. Owolabi also received a \$75,000 fine.

Conway said her clients feel the sanctions from the College do not go far enough in addressing the damage they have suffered. That is why they have chosen launch a lawsuit.

"They want to make sure no one else has to undergo what happened to them."

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